

Care of Children: Clinical and Pastoral Dimensions

Louisville Seminary (PC 3163)
Fall 2013: 3-4:20 Tuesday/Thursday
Room 122, Schlegel Hall
Instructors: Bradley Wigger and Jennifer Schiller

Description

This course provides theological, theoretical, and practical foundations for a comprehensive exploration of the world of children. Assessment of children is seen through the lens of pastoral care and counseling utilizing a systemic approach. Developmental, pastoral, and clinical assessments are incorporated to determine possible individual, family, and community interventions. This multi-dimensional framework provides awareness of societal, familial, cultural, and theological implications for providing therapeutic and pastoral care for children in a variety of settings including church, school, home, agency, and residential placements. Course materials and activities will focus on psychological and spiritual development of children. Relevant theories of Marriage and Family Therapy for use in providing therapy with children such as solution focused, narrative, structural, expressive, and play therapy will be considered in an experiential format.

Specific topics of concern include: attachment, child spirituality, family structure and stressors, grief and loss, anger, depression and anxiety, child abuse and neglect, the impact of trauma, and considerations of diversity.

This course is an MFT elective and a general elective for the Master of Divinity program (it does not fulfill the pastoral care requirement).

Objectives

By the end of the semester, students will be able to (reference to MAMFT Student Learning Outcomes are in parentheses):

1. Articulate the basics of attachment theory and how it informs their work with children. (MFT: SLO 1 a & b; MDiv: SLO 9)
2. Utilize play therapy techniques for child and family assessment and treatment planning. (MFT SLO 2, 3; MDiv: SLO 9)
3. Articulate and demonstrate at least one evidence-based approach to play therapy. (MFT: SLO 1 a & b, 2, 3; MDiv: 9)
4. Formulate systemic interventions for therapeutic work with children based upon a specific theoretical approach. (MFT: SLO 1 a & b, 2, 3; MDiv: 8, 9)
5. Articulate a basic understanding of child spiritual development in the context of family relationships and develop and integrate a pastoral sense of care of children. (MFT: SLO 2, 3, 4; MDiv: SLO 9, 15, 17)

6. Recognize specific childhood areas of concern and how these are evident in child play, family interaction, and school/community experiences.(MFT: SLO 2, 3, 4; MDiv: SLO 5, 9)
7. Establish a culturally sensitive response to issues of gender, race, ethnicity, class, and poverty and articulate awareness of the impact of these differences in the lives of children. (MFT: SLO 1a & b, 2, 3, 4; MDiv: 5, 6, 7, 8, 9)

Requirements

To meet these goals the course relies heavily upon class discussions of readings, reflective exercises, students' writing, presentations, and practice with various forms of play and relational models of therapy. Accordingly, class participation and preparation are crucial. Guidance for weekly assignments and the final project will be given in class.

Primary Texts (all are on library reserve)

Cambrick-Graham, Lee, ed. *Children in Family Contexts: Perspectives on Treatment*, Second Edition. New York: The Guilford Press, 2006

Carmichael, Karla D. *Play Therapy: An Introduction*. Upper Saddle River, N.J. : Pearson/Merrill Prentice Hall, 2006

Coles, Robert. *The Spiritual Life of Children*. New York: Mariner Books, 1991

Kadohata, Cynthia. *Kira-Kira*. New York : Aladdin Paperbacks, 2006, c2004.

McCall, Guadalupe Garcia. *Under the Mesquite*. New York: Lee & Low Books, 2011.

Plus a few chapters from the book:

Schaeffer, Charles, ed. *Foundations of Play Therapy*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley, 2011.

Articles (available through library database, ATLA):

Surr, John. Links between early attachment experiences and manifestations of spirituality. *International Journal of Children's Spirituality*, 16(2), May 2011, 129-141. [Surr Link \(on ATLA\)](#) (You will need to access from campus or log in)

Hall, Todd; Fujikawa, Annie; Halcrow, Sarah; Hill, Peter. Attachment To God and Implicit Spirituality: Clarifying Correspondence and Compensation Models. *Journal of Psychology and Theology*, 37(4), 2009, 227-242. [Hall, et. al. Link \(on ATLA\)](#)

Additional Resources

Davies, Douglas. *Child Development: A Practitioner's Guide*, 3rd Edition. New York: The Guilford Press, 2010. ISBN: 978-1606239094

Gibbs, Jewelle Taylor, and Larke Nahme Huang. *Children of Color: Psychological Interventions with Culturally Diverse Youth*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2003. ISBN: 787962686

Gil, Eliana. *Helping Abused and Traumatized Children: Integrating Directive and Nondirective Approaches*. New York: The Guilford Press, 2006. ISBN: 9781593853341

Minuchin, Patrica, Jorge Colapinto, and Salvador Minuchin. *Working with Families of the Poor*, Second Edition. New York: The Guilford Press, 2006.

Wigger, J. Bradley. *The Power of God at Home: Nurturing Our Children in Love and Grace*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2003. ISBN: 0787955884

Yust, Karen Marie. *Real Kids, Real Faith: Practices for Nurturing Children's Spiritual Lives*. San Francisco: Jossey Bass, 2004. ISBN: 0787964077

Grading

Course Engagement 50% (Weekly assignments plus participation)

Statement of Faith 10%

Final project 40%

Course Engagement

Journal: Every week students will have a journal assignment related to the reading. Ordinarily these will be short 1-3 pages or the equivalent in some cases, answering questions or completing tasks (e.g. draw a picture, invent a simple game) provided by the teacher. These assignments should demonstrate a thorough understanding of the reading and express thoughtful engagement with the task/question. Late assignments will not ordinarily be accepted—in rare cases they may be, with prior permission, but the grade may be lowered at the teacher's discretion. Journals will be collected periodically throughout the semester.

Class participation:

- Weekly attendance and class preparation are assumed. Unexcused absences and other manners of nonparticipation (e.g. checking email, texts, phone) will result in a lowering of the course grade at the professor's discretion. See technology policy below.
- Each class will begin with a picture book devotion led by students (five minutes maximum).

Statement of Faith in Relation to Suffering and Childhood

Students will write a 2-page paper (approximately 500-600 words) describing their understanding of God's relationship to childhood suffering and vulnerability. That is, who and/or where is God in relation to childhood suffering. More guidance will be given in class.

Final Project

Students will design their own final projects, with various options available. The projects must be of obvious relevance to the course. The work involved should be roughly the equivalent of the time and energy involved in a 20-page research paper, but practice-oriented projects are highly valued as well. The time could be spent teaching, writing, interviewing, organizing, creating, or providing resources for your project. Typically a 20-page paper is calculated at approximately 20 to 30 hours of work. Some possibilities are:

Constructing a workshop integrating play therapy

(for example, a parenting workshop; training module for other therapists or clergy, play therapy for adults or teens, how to talk/listen to children)

Writing a research paper on a relevant subject

(for example, psychological theories of play, a theology of play, a theology of childhood, multiple intelligences and play, play and religious education, play and creativity, play and healing)

Conducting qualitative research

(for example, interview several children, teachers, parents, or therapists, artists, novelists, or musicians about play or creative processes.)

Designing and or actually implementing a church educational event

(for example, a Sunday school series on caring for children, an inter-generational retreat focused on playing in God's grace or a spirituality of play.)

Designing a group therapy plan

(for example, a six week grief group for children 5 to 8 years old, a family group series, or family-related series.

Students must get approval for their projects, submitting a brief provisional plan by **October 8** with a progress report due **November 12**. Final project is due **December 12**.

Electronic Technology Policy

This is a low-to-no technology course during class time. There will rarely, if ever, be a need for using laptops, tablets, phones, or any other technology that takes attention away from the classroom. A paper notebook will be sufficient. If there is an overwhelming need for use of a laptop, please request permission from the professor. You may use such technology for homework.

School Policies (excerpted from The Faculty Handbook)

Use of Inclusive Language

In accordance with seminary policy, students are to use inclusive language in class discussions and in written and oral communication by using language representative of the whole human community in respect to gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, age, and physical and intellectual capacities. Direct quotations from theological texts and translations of the Bible do not have to be altered to conform to this policy. In your own writing, however, when referring to God, you are encouraged to use a variety of images and metaphors, reflecting the richness of the Bible's images for God. See for more information, see:

<http://www.lpts.edu/academics/academic-resources/academic-support-center/online-writing-lab/avoiding-gender-bias>

Academic Honesty

All work turned in to the instructors is expected to be the work of the student whose name appears on the assignment. Any borrowing of the ideas or the words of others must be acknowledged by quotation marks (where appropriate) and by citation of author and source. Use of another's language or ideas from online resources is included in this policy, and must be attributed to author and source of the work being cited. Failure to do so constitutes plagiarism, and may result in failure of the course. Two occurrences of plagiarism may result in dismissal from the Seminary. Students unfamiliar with issues related to academic honesty can find help from the staff in the Academic Support Center. For more information, see the Policy for Academic Honesty in the Student Handbook.

Special Accommodations

Students requiring accommodations for a documented physical or learning disability should be in contact with the Director of the Academic Support Center (kmapes@lpts.edu) during the first

two weeks of a semester (or before the semester begins) and should speak with the instructor as soon as possible to arrange appropriate adjustments. Students with environmental or other sensitivities that may affect their learning are also encouraged to speak with the instructor.

Citation Policy

Citations in your papers should follow Seminary standards, which are based on these guides:

American Psychological Association. *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*. 6th ed. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association, 2010.

Turabian, Kate L., Wayne C. Booth, Gregory G. Colomb, and Joseph M. Williams. *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations: Chicago Style for Students and Researchers*. 8th ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013.

The Chicago Manual of Style. 16th ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010.

Copies of these guides are available at the library and in the Academic Support Center.

Attendance Policy

According to the Seminary catalog, students are expected to attend class meetings regularly. In case of illness or emergency, students are asked to notify the instructor of their planned absence from class, either prior to the session or within 24 hours of the class session. Missing 1/4 or more of the course may result in a low or failing grade in the course.

Working Calendar

Sept. 5

Course Introduction

Reading Corner (and sign-up)

Hopes and Expectations

Journal Instructions

Sept. 10-12

The World of Children

Reading: *Kira, Kira* (all)

Journal

Reading and journal assignments to be done by Tuesday of each week

Sept. 17-19

Attachment, Love, and Play

Reading: Surr article: [Surr Link \(on ATLA\)](#)

Carmichael, *Play Therapy*, chs. 1-3.

Schaeffer, *Foundations of Play Therapy* (on reserve), ch. 15.

Recommended: Hall, et. al. article: [Hall, et. al. Link \(on ATLA\)](#)

Journal

Sept. 24-26

Child Centered and Experiential Play Therapies

Reading: Carmichael, chs. 4-7.
Schaffer, ch. 11.

Journal

Oct. 1-3

Childhood Spirituality and Research with Invisible Beings

Watch: [Coles and Ruby Bridges](#) (YouTube clip—5 minutes)

Reading: Coles, Intro. and chs. 1-4; 8.

Journal

Oct. 8-10

Abuse, Neglect, and Trauma

Guest: Jannine Sayago-Gonzalez, *The Center for Women and Families*

Read: Cambrick-Graham, ed., *Children in Family Contexts*, chs. 9-13; 19.

Journal

Submit a brief project proposal/idea (one paragraph)

Oct. 15-17

Research and Study Week (no class)

Oct. 22-24

Grief and Loss

Read: Coles, chs. 5-7

Cambrick-Graham, ch. 14

Journal

Statement of Faith

Oct. 29-31

Family Structure

Read: Cambrick-Graham, chs. 15, 17-18, 20

Carmichael, ch. 12

Journal

Nov. 5-7

Cultural Differences and Childhood

Read: McCall, *Under the Mesquite*

Carmichael, ch. 16

Journal

Nov. 12-14

Contexts and Theories

Read: Cambrick-Graham, ch. 16

Carmichael, ch. 9

Schaffer (on reserve), ch. 16

Journal

Submit a progress report for final project

Nov. 19-21

Play and Assessment

Read: Carmichael, chs. 13 and 15

Cambrick-Graham, ch. 3

Journal

Nov. 26

Diagnosis and Treatment

Read: Carmichael, ch. 14

Cambrick-Graham, ch. 4

TBA (another reading)

Journal

Dec. 3-5

Narrative and Play

Read: Coles (TBA)

Journal

Turn in Journal

December 12: Project due